



Congressman Mike Simpson

E-Newsletter

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A Bad Day for Our Troops, A Bad Day for our Country

By Congressman Mike Simpson

(This is Congressman Simpson's floor speech concerning the unbinding Iraq Resolution) Madame Speaker, I rise today not because I want to take part in this debate, but because I am ashamed that this Congress is engaging in it at all.

I've heard a lot of posturing so far this week. I've heard a lot of hyperbole and a lot of revisionist history. I've also heard some things that just don't mesh with reality. I don't think that everything my colleagues say is completely honest. So for a moment, let's be honest -- because that is the least we owe to our constituents and to the men and women who are fighting this war.

I am willing to admit that if Congress knew in 2002 what it knows today it might not have voted to authorize the war. Knowing that Saddam Hussein apparently did not have weapons of mass destruction, Congress might have preferred to contain him, perhaps bomb him, strengthen international sanctions, and work with our allies in the region to undermine his regime.

But we can't go back to 2002 and redo that vote. We have to deal with the situation

that is currently before us. And what is before us right now is a Congressional resolution that undermines our troops while they are in the middle of fighting a war that Congress sent them to fight. I do not understand why my colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't see that.

For just a moment, I want to ask my colleagues to put themselves in the positions of the thousands of soldiers on the ground in Iraq. What would you think if you learned that the very people who sent you to fight this war are now saying that they don't support what you are doing? (continued on Page 3)

Weekly Website

Visit:

<http://www.americasupportsyou.mil/americasupportsyou/index.aspx> to learn how you can support our troops.

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The Facts Behind Real ID

Ending illegal immigration is a priority for Idahoans. Each day I hear from constituents concerned with our inability to enforce our borders. Our broken immigration system, they say, leaves this country vulnerable to attack and promotes illegal immigration and blatant disregard of our nation's laws. I couldn't agree more.

So I'm concerned with the recent debate about the REAL ID Act. Congress passed the REAL ID Act to fix specific provisions of our immigration law abused by terrorists and others trying to enter our country illegally, responding directly to the 9-11 Commission's recommendations. It prohibits illegal aliens from obtaining legitimate identification and terrorists from remaining in the country by abusing asylum laws. It expedites construction of a 14-mile border fence in San Diego. It allows deportation for terrorism-related offenses. The REAL ID Act closes loopholes that terrorists—including the 9-11 hijackers—used to enter and stay in the U.S.

In this debate, it's important to separate fact from fiction, especially when considering the bill's impact on Idaho. Many rumors going around are pure fiction. The law doesn't require that drivers' licenses use tracking technologies, establish a federal database of driver's license information run by the Department of Homeland Security, or create a national identification system.

In fact, so far the REAL ID Act is the only viable alternative to creating a national identification card. The government must have a secure and effective way to verify the identity and legal status of individuals getting on planes or entering secure government facilities. Because the federal government doesn't issue a national identification card to all citizens and legal residents, state-issued driver's licenses are the primary identification documents in the U.S. today. Usually it works for these documents to be dual-purpose because Idaho and other states require proof of identification and legal residency when applying for a license to drive. However, some states do nothing to prevent known terrorists or illegal immigrants from obtaining driver's licenses, providing them with de facto identification. Their inaction accommodates—even encourages—illegal immigration.

If Idaho complies with the minimum standards set out in the REAL ID Act, the state would be required to share driver information with other states, but the law does not require them to share

any information with the federal government. In fact, most states—including Idaho—already share this information with each other to make it easier for new residents to get licensed and prevent people with suspended or invalid licenses in another state from moving to bypass the suspension.

If Idaho doesn't comply, Idahoans could still use driver's licenses as such, but an Idaho driver's license could no longer be used as federally-accepted identification.

Uncertainties about how the law will be carried out should be addressed when the implementation rules, just released Thursday, are evaluated. At that point I look forward to working with the Governor and the Idaho State Legislature to ensure that implementation of the REAL ID Act doesn't impose on the state. As a member of the Appropriations Committee I am already working to provide sufficient funding to assist states in conforming to the minimum standards. But until we have an opportunity to examine the impact of those regulations, we jump the gun to say the entire bill should be repealed or Idaho should not comply.

Should Idaho choose not to comply, the state still has a responsibility. Our current immigration policies invite the world's most dangerous criminals, gangs, and terrorists to come here and ply their horrible trade. So far, the REAL ID Act is the only option on the table for addressing these problems. I am certainly open to other ideas. Americans have demanded a secure, accurate system for issuing official identification documents, and I look forward to hearing the ideas of the Governor and the Idaho Legislature for achieving that goal. But to walk away from this issue without taking any action is unacceptable. To do so would give the government no choice but to create a national identification card, which we all oppose.

More Information

Visit:

http://www.dhs.gov/xprevprot/1aws/gc_1172767635686.shtm to learn more about the Real ID Act.

Iraq Article Continued from Page 1

On the ground in Iraq, there are two things that keep you going: the thought of returning home to your family and the knowledge that you are doing something to protect your nation from terrorism. But if Congressional Democrats have their way today, they will take away from our soldiers the support of their Congress and of their Country. What a terrible message to send to these brave soldiers.

For just a moment, put yourself in the shoes of the terrorists. What would you think when you heard the U.S. Congress is voting against the war? You would think you were winning. You would be encouraged by the news.

You would think that everything Osama Bin Laden had said about Americans had been true all along. You would think that Americans cannot stand bloodshed and will cower from the fight. You would think that they don't have the stomach for a long-term battle and if the terrorists just hold on, the United States will eventually leave with its tails between its legs. What a terrible message to send at the exact moment that we are preparing to send more troops into battle.

At some point, my colleagues across the aisle have to let go of the fact that their newfound opposition to the War in Iraq is popular in their districts and act in the best interests for the future of our nation. This resolution isn't a diversion, a side-show, or even a shot-across the bow. It is a dangerous message to send.

I don't say any of this lightly and I don't say it for political reasons. I say it because I mean it. In 2006, I was the only Republican to vote against the rule when my party tried to embarrass Mr. Murtha. Then, I thought that my party was playing games with the war and I refused to support that effort. Today, I think that the other party is playing games with the war and I refuse to have any part of this.

I would rather we consider a motion to pull all of our troops out of Iraq immediately than vote on this Democrat resolution that undermines our troops while at the same time puts them in harms way. This resolution is the worst of all worlds.

My final thought today is that it is clear to many of us that this resolution is simply a Democratic attempt to embarrass President Bush. My friends across the aisle know they can not impeach him. They know they can not change the fact that many of them voted for the

War in Iraq. And most of them recognize the dangers of voting to de-fund the war. So instead, they are trying to embarrass the President.

I say fine, embarrass the President. Send him a message that you are now in charge. Remind him that voters demanded change last November. Do whatever you need to do, but don't undermine our troops in the process. Leave them out of your plans for payback because they did nothing to attract your anger or frustration.

Madame Speaker, what we are doing today is wrong. We're better than this. We're smarter than this. We're above using the war, and our troops, for political gain. What the Democrats are doing with this resolution is not just intellectually dishonest, it is morally bankrupt.

Thank you, Madame Speaker.



Simpson's Salute to Veterans at Ada County Lincoln Day

It is my honor to recognize a special group of people this evening.

These are ordinary people: They come from the factories of Detroit and the cornfields of Iowa.



They come from the docks and rigs of the Gulf Coast, the beaches of the West Coast, and they come from the Mountains and Valleys and Farms and Ranches of Idaho.

They are black, they are white, they are Hispanic. They come from the Far East and from the Mideast and they are Native Americans.

They are Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, Mormon, and Muslim.

They are Mothers and Fathers. Husbands and Wives. Sons and Daughters.

In spite of all their differences – a stronger bond unites them – They are Americans and they are American Veterans.

They answered our Nations call in the defense

of Liberty.

At Lexington, Concord, Bunker Hill, and Valley Forge, they fought for the Truths that we hold Self Evident.

At Vicksburg, Antietam, and Gettysburg, they fought for the Government of the People, by the People, and for the People.

In Europe and the Pacific they fought Fascism and Nazism.

In Korea and Southeast Asia they fought Communism.

And today, half way around the world, they fight Radical Fanaticism.

And throughout (to quote Winston Churchill) they Never, Never, Never Quit.

It's because of their sacrifices that you and I can live in the Penthouse of Freedom.

And because of their sacrifices – we must Never, Never, Never Quit on them.

If you are a Veteran or an Active Member of our Armed Services, please stand so we may all thank you. Thank you.

Simpson Recognizes Congressional Medal of Honor Recipients with National Day of Distinction



Congressman Simpson joined colleagues in passing H. Con. Res. 47 — supporting the goals and ideals of a National Medal of Honor Day to celebrate and honor the recipients of the Medal of Honor.

“Idaho has several Medal of Honor recipients including; Vernon Baker, Bernard Fisher, Ed Freeman, and Arthur Jackson,” said Simpson. “As we approach the anniversary of the first Medal of Honor awarded on March 25, 1864, I think it highly appropriate that we reflect on the lives and deeds of these brave men.”

H. Con. Res 47 recommends a national day of remembrance, reflection, and celebration for those citizens who so valiantly defended our nation and protected their fellow servicemen with the most extraordinary courage and achievement—recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

“I commend my colleagues in the House Armed Services Committee for leading an effort to commemorate the brave men who have received our nation’s highest military honor,” said Simpson. “The honor is mine to be able to recognize these heroes with a National Day of Distinction.”

